


# 2016

ANNUAL  
REPORT



**WESTERN  
RESOURCE  
ADVOCATES**





“When one tugs at a  
single thing in Nature,  
he finds it attached to  
the rest of the world.”  
– John Muir

## From the President

As I write to introduce this Annual Report, I admit to mixed emotions. In the face of a changing political landscape and decisions from Washington that will harm our environment, it feels odd sharing stories of success. Yet despite the challenges which have unfolded since the close of the year, Western Resource Advocates had many successes in 2016. Our team of talented staff and a committed Board of Directors refined our mission and created a long-term vision that will guide our work over the next 25 years. Our vision charts a path for the West that will ensure that our vibrant communities exist in balance with nature, and serves as a “north star,” aligning our work into the future.

### We are committed to and envision that:

- **Western rivers and lakes will have abundant clean water to support habitat for fish and wildlife, communities and agriculture, and world class recreational opportunities. The Colorado River will flow to the sea.**
- **Our homes, buildings and transportation systems will be powered by clean energy. The West will prosper in a zero-carbon economy.**
- **Half of western landscapes and habitat will be protected and connected to support thriving wildlife populations and unparalleled opportunities to enjoy the West's natural beauty.**
- **The West will have clean air and clean water to support healthy communities and vital habitat.**

Our vision is ambitious, but this is not pollyannish thinking. For over a quarter of a century, WRA and its network of partners and supporters have successfully deployed experts, attorneys, engineers, and scientists to win significant environmental protections and make important progress. Our efforts have resulted

in the closure of coal-fired power plants around the West, billions of dollars of investment in clean energy, hundreds of miles of protections across seven river systems, cleaner air, and protected landscapes throughout the region.

Our work in 2016 added to those successes and you will see just a handful of those stories in the pages that follow. For me, these stories not only provide hope, but also demonstrate a pathway to more accomplishment to protect what we love about the West, to spur more investment in clean energy, and to address the threats of climate change.

The changes in Washington signal that we have a lot of very tough work ahead, but we will redouble our efforts and develop even tighter strategies. I have great faith that WRA can achieve our vision. We have sharply focused strategic plans designed to protect rivers, to advance clean energy, and to connect and protect Western landscapes. We are collaborating with partners around the region and have the demonstrated expertise and policy savvy to leverage the changes we seek. Our efforts are supported by many passionate and committed donors who share our vision, and millions of westerners who share our dreams for protected western land, air, and water. I invite you to learn more about our accomplishments and to continue your partnership with Western Resource Advocates. Your support ensures that we build the momentum to overcome federal challenges and to ensure the future we want and deserve.

**Together we can #ProtectTheWest.**

For the West,




Jon Goldin-Dubois, President







# Conserving Western Lands



**The Western Lands Program works to maintain, grow, and connect Western lands and resources, and helps to ensure that the quality of life Westerners enjoy is preserved for future generations. WRA envisions a future where half of Western landscapes and habitat will be protected and connected to support thriving wildlife populations and unparalleled opportunities to enjoy the West's natural beauty.**



A hiker with a backpack is seen from behind, standing on a rocky trail and looking out over a vast canyon landscape. The canyon features distinctive orange-red rock formations and scattered evergreen trees under a blue sky with some clouds.

## Conserving Western Lands Success Highlights

### **Increased Protections from US Magnesium Superfund Site**

In collaboration with our partners, WRA successfully advocated for the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to develop a more stringent oversight of air and ground water pollution from the US Magnesium Superfund Site. As a result, DEQ issued notices of violation to the owners of US Magnesium for air and surface water pollution, and required the company to install groundwater protective measures.

### **Expanded Wetland Restoration and Protections in Utah**

WRA, along with our partners, successfully advocated for the Utah Division of Transportation to redefine impacts from the West Davis Freeway construction, resulting in a proposal to greatly increase the number of wetland acres purchased, protected, and restored along Great Salt Lake. The unusually high ratio of wetlands impacted to wetlands saved is good for the environment and unprecedented in the state.

## **Successfully Prevented the Development of Dirty Fuels in Utah**

As a result of WRA persistently challenging any permits issued for oil shale and tar sands development in Utah since 2009, no dirty fuels were developed in the State of Utah in 2016. Oil shale and tar sands mining and processing create more carbon pollution than coal, pollute drinking water, impact wildlife, and emit other harmful air pollutants. To date, these challenges have resulted in successfully stopping any new commercial development of oil shale and tar sands in Utah.








Advancing Clean Energy





**The Clean Energy Program advances energy efficiency and transitions electricity production away from fossil fuels toward clean, renewable energy. Modernizing the way we generate and use energy is essential to prevent climate change, improve air quality, and protect public health. WRA envisions a future where our homes, buildings, and transportation systems are powered by clean energy and the entire West prospers in a zero-carbon economy.**



# Advancing Clean Energy Success Highlights

## **Advanced Energy Efficiency and Stopped Investment in Coal Plant in New Mexico**

Energy efficiency is a front-line strategy to reduce carbon pollution that is harmful to our health and environment. WRA helped prevent Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) from adopting a rate structure that would have encouraged higher energy consumption and discouraged energy efficiency. We also led extensive litigation before the Public Regulation Commission that enforced a portion of utility revenues being dedicated to advancing energy efficiency. WRA successfully challenged PNM's plans to unnecessarily invest \$52 million in the coal-fired San Juan Generating Station. The investment would have extended the life of that plant, delaying large-scale reductions in carbon emissions.

## **Accelerated Retirement of Nevada Coal Plant and Acquired More Clean and Low-Cost Solar for Southern Nevada**

WRA and its partners helped accelerate the retirement of Nevada Power Company's Unit 4 of the Reid Gardner coal plant in February 2017, preventing years of additional carbon pollution. WRA also successfully advocated for the acquisition of the Techren Solar Photovoltaic Project. This project will supply Nevada Power Company with the lowest-cost solar energy in Nevada and the nation to date.



## **Secured Favorable Rooftop Solar Rates and More Clean Energy for Xcel Customers in Colorado**

WRA partnered with diverse stakeholders to develop and secure a strong net metering policy for Xcel Energy that encourages customers to invest in rooftop solar, while keeping rates affordable and serving low-income customers in Colorado. WRA also helped develop and secure an agreement with Xcel Energy and other energy partners that creates Colorado's largest wind farm (the Rush Creek Wind Project), which will generate enough electricity to power 180,000 homes and eliminate 1 million tons of carbon pollution annually.

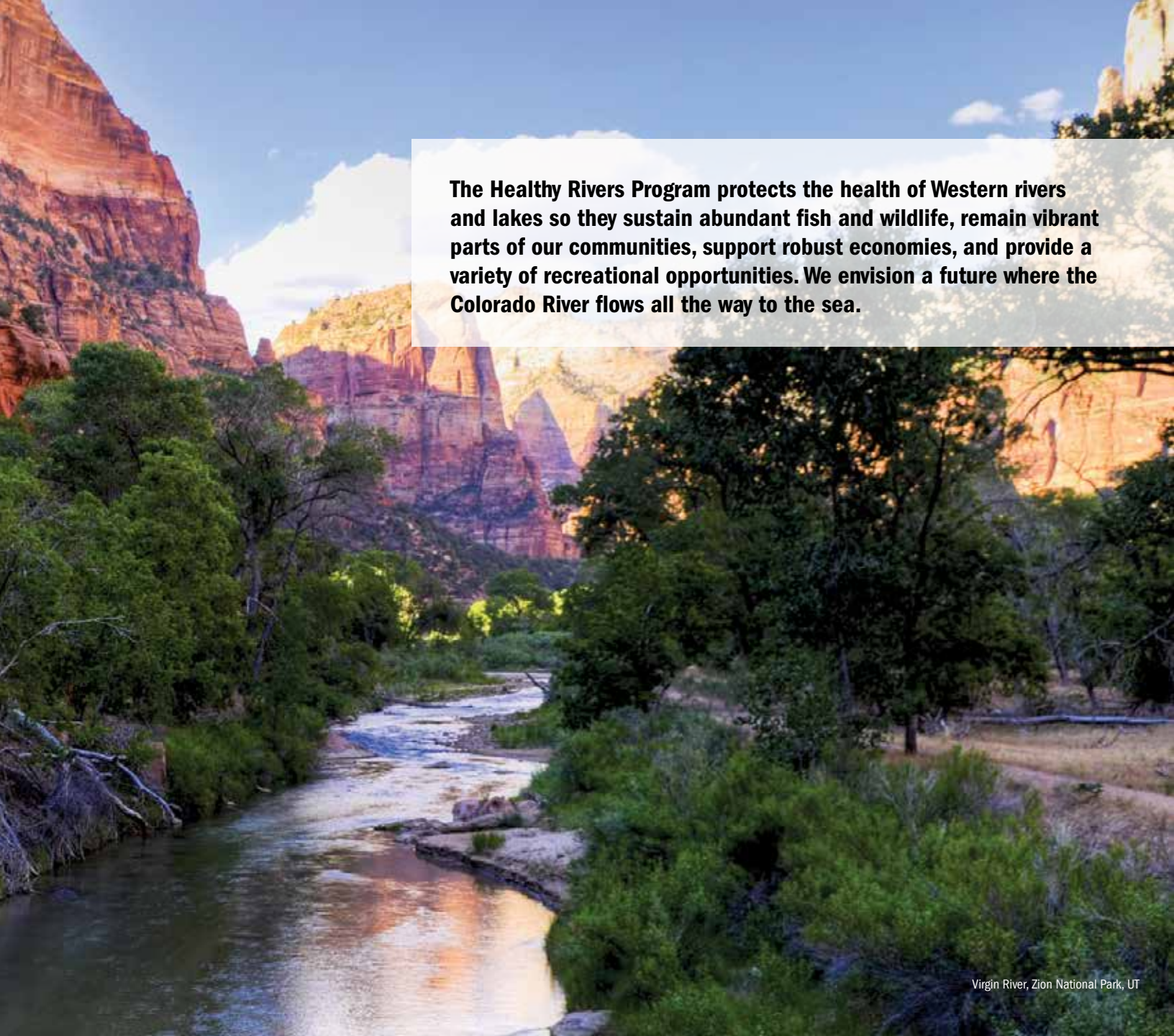




A scenic view of a river flowing through a lush green forest. In the foreground, a large, gnarled tree trunk stands prominently. The river is surrounded by dense green foliage and shrubs. In the background, a steep, rocky cliff face with reddish-brown hues rises above the forest. The overall scene is vibrant and natural.

Ensuring Healthy Rivers





**The Healthy Rivers Program protects the health of Western rivers and lakes so they sustain abundant fish and wildlife, remain vibrant parts of our communities, support robust economies, and provide a variety of recreational opportunities. We envision a future where the Colorado River flows all the way to the sea.**





# Ensuring Healthy Rivers Success Highlights

## **Legalized the Use of Residential Rain Barrels in Colorado**

After leading a two-year battle in the legislature, WRA helped legalize the use of residential rain barrels for all Coloradans! Colorado water laws had previously made residential rain water collection illegal. Using rain barrels connects people to the natural water cycle and helps advance efforts to meet the Colorado Water Plan's landmark urban water conservation goal.

## **Protected Water, River Flows, and Conditions for Fish and Wildlife in Colorado**

WRA secured continued support from the Colorado Water Conservation Board for Colorado's Instream Flow Program, which protects water rights in rivers for the benefit of fish, wildlife, and the larger environment. In addition, we helped obtain an instream flow water right for Schaefer Creek in Colorado's high country. WRA played a key role in preventing a policy that would have allowed water currently dedicated to fish and wildlife to be reduced and rededicated to speculative future water development.

We also improved the Water Rights Protection Act by drafting and passing an amendment ensuring bypass flows that help fish get around dams and water diversion structures on public lands. Finally, by successfully defending water temperature standards before the Water Quality Control Commission, WRA and its partners were able to protect fish and aquatic life in our rivers. All of these fish and wildlife victories are good news for anglers, towns, and local recreation economies across Colorado.



## **Advanced Water Conservation and Reuse in Arizona**

WRA's advocacy efforts with Governor Doug Ducey's Water Augmentation Council strengthened support for increasing water conservation and water reuse. This success ensures water for the environment and will help address future Colorado River water supply reductions. WRA, joined by partner conservation groups, also gained support from Phoenix, Tucson, and Yuma agriculture on a package of water management options, including water conservation and reuse, to avoid water shortages in Arizona. The State of Arizona and other stakeholders now have a plan to decrease their Colorado River/Lake Mead water use by 1.2 million acre-feet over the next several years.

## **Advanced Protections for Great Salt Lake and Utah Lake**

Willard Spur, a channel that separates two bays in Great Salt Lake in Utah, is the most productive part of the Great Salt Lake ecosystem, providing habitat and food for shorebirds. Working with conservation partners, WRA and FRIENDS of Great Salt Lake persuaded the State of Utah to enhance water quality protections for the entire Willard Spur and to draft rules that allow for public involvement in the water quality process. This enables WRA to address future algal blooms that threaten both Great Salt Lake and Utah Lake.



# Improving Air Quality in Utah

**Utah residents have a right to clean air and WRA is dedicated to using our expertise and legal skills to ensure the state attains clean air standards. WRA envisions a future where everyone in the West breathes clean air every day.**



A vertical photograph on the left side of the page showing a mountain range at sunrise. The sky is a mix of orange, pink, and blue, and the mountains are silhouetted against the light. In the foreground, there is a field of colorful wildflowers.

# Success Highlights

## **Prevented Delay in Utah's Plan to Address Serious Air Pollution**

WRA and partners flooded the EPA with comments and successfully stopped the State of Utah from delaying the creation of a plan to reduce pollution and clean Utah's air to meet federal health-based standards for fine particulate matter (PM2.5). These particulates increase the risk of heart attacks, cancer, and asthma attacks, and are linked to loss of intelligence in children, higher rates of autism, attention deficit disorders, multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer's disease, and accelerated cognitive decline in the elderly.

## **Protected Families from Toxic Air Pollution**

Representing HEAL Utah and Utah Physicians for a Healthy Environment, WRA contested the construction of an industrial and municipal waste incinerator in the middle of Salt Lake County. Our efforts resulted in much more rigorous emission limits and monitoring requirements. As a result, construction of the plant has not moved forward. Waste incineration is known to produce toxic dioxin, furan, mercury, and lead pollution, all of which are linked to cancer, neurotoxicity, birth defects, and other serious health problems.

Left: Wasatch Mountain sunrise

## **Improved Plan to End Wintertime Smog Inversions Along the Wasatch Front**

WRA provided expert comment and analysis to the State of Utah as it developed a plan to end wintertime smog inversions in order to meet federal Clean Air Act standards. The Wasatch Front valleys, the surrounding mountains, and Utah's weather provide the ideal conditions for wintertime smog inversions, which lead to high levels of PM2.5. WRA helped ensure that Utah's first plan to reduce emissions along the Wasatch Front included more rigorous emission limits on large polluting industries.

Below: Children playing





# Collaboration

## Working Together to Protect the West

### **Wilderness Workshop: Protecting wild places and wildlife, for their sake...and for ours.**

*The Wilderness Workshop is the conservation watchdog of nearly 3 million acres of public lands in western Colorado. As they faced the challenge of protecting the iconic Maroon and Castle Creek valleys in and near the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness Area from the potential development of large and destructive dams, they reached out to WRA to form a collaborative partnership. Our two organizations are now engaged in negotiations with the City of Aspen and others seeking to find a solution that will meet the City's water needs while avoiding construction of new dams. WRA is dedicated to building collaborative relationships with stakeholders, decision-makers, and other conservation organizations to effectively advance the work of protecting the West.*

#### **How did the collaboration between Wilderness Workshop and WRA begin?**

The initial introduction was through a member of WRA's board of directors who lives in our community. As we faced the issue of opposing the City's water rights to build large

and destructive dams, it quickly became apparent that the legal expertise of WRA would be a perfect match for this. We also recognized that WRA's solution-oriented policy expertise on water related issues, such as water storage, would add a critical ingredient to our chances for success.

#### **Has the partnership with WRA impacted your work?**

Absolutely! Our partnership with WRA has given us the confidence to proceed in an arena where we are not the experts. We can bring the expertise of local geography, politics, and communications to the work of building



strategies for a solution, but we do not have the necessary experience or expertise on water law or water storage—that is what WRA adds to our efforts. We each fill the gap in the other organization's strengths to form a successful partnership. This collaborative relationship has given Wilderness Workshop a real leg to stand on—knowing we have someone to rely on will give us the courage to engage in other water related issues in the future.

### **How is your work advancing important changes toward protecting the West?**

I think we have a very unique opportunity to influence changes in both water policy and the overall culture related to water—advancing a precedence moving away from large water storage to a new model. Abandoning reservoirs for something different; finding new and creative solutions. Our team (Wilderness Workshop and WRA) believes that the

city's future needs can be met with a mix of water conservation, recycling, and temporary sharing with agriculture, and we are hopeful that a mutually-beneficial settlement with the City is possible. This is very encouraging for similar efforts in other communities. From specific threats like we are facing in Colorado, to more global applications, it's nice to be part of something that has a broader application and impact.



“It's been great working with WRA – not just because of the legal expertise and representation they bring to the table, but the strategy aspect. WRA offered solutions that we didn't have the ability to do.”

– Will Roush, Conservation Director





# Inspiration

## Working Together to Protect the West

Dancers at the Rose Wagner Theater, UT  
Photo Credits : Steven Vargo, Vargo Photography

### Light As Air: Inspiring a community to be part of the solution

*In April, dancers from across Utah shared the stage for one night to raise awareness and funds in support of WRA's efforts to protect and improve Utah's air quality. In its third year, Light As Air is an inspiring community event started by Leigh Cornu, with the goal of bringing people together to create lasting improvements to northern Utah's air quality for the benefit of all who live there.*

#### Why do you support WRA?

We wanted to support an organization that we felt was making the biggest difference in making clean air a reality. I think the work that WRA is doing is very important right now and every day I am grateful there are people that are fighting to preserve what I love so much about living in Utah.

I call WRA the silent warriors that are at the front line, defending our precious resources so that my children and my children's children can enjoy them as I do.

#### Why does air quality matter to you?

I think when we focus on cleaning the air, we are also indirectly focusing on cleaning up the water. I think in order to make big

changes it takes a lot of people making small changes and making their voices heard at the legislative level. Clean air can be a catalyst for more changes because the effects of air pollution, especially in Salt Lake, Provo, and Logan are indisputable.



## How has your event inspired others?

The year after our first event, I ran into a woman that I had met briefly at Light As Air. She told me that after that event she quit her corporate job and went to work at our Bike Share program - Green Bike. I thought, 'This is what Light As Air is about - inspiring people to be part of the solution!'

## Why is it important to Protect the West?

Growing up in the West and being able to enjoy all of the resources, has made me who I am today. Connecting to nature is one of the biggest gifts of this life, and I hope to do what I can to preserve it so that future generations can enjoy it.

I have a 7 year-old daughter and I am hopeful that she will hike in the mountains, and see wildlife while she does. I am hopeful that she and her friends will go camping in the desert and see what the stars look like in the middle of nowhere. I am hopeful that we can make some significant changes right now, so that we are all able to enjoy this wonderful planet and preserve it for generations to come!



“It makes me grateful and it inspires me to do what I can, with what I have, to make a change and support those that are working for a sustainable future.”  
– Leigh Cornu, Founder of Light As Air



A person wearing a red jacket, a plaid shirt, and an orange beanie is seen from behind, sitting on a large, light-colored rock. They are looking out over a vast, rugged desert landscape with layered rock formations and a clear blue sky. The person has a yellow backpack on their back.

## WHERE WE WORK

**Western Resource  
Advocates works  
across the Interior  
West in Arizona,  
Colorado, Nevada,  
New Mexico,  
Montana, Utah,  
and Wyoming.**





MONTANA

WYOMING

NEVADA



UTAH

COLORADO

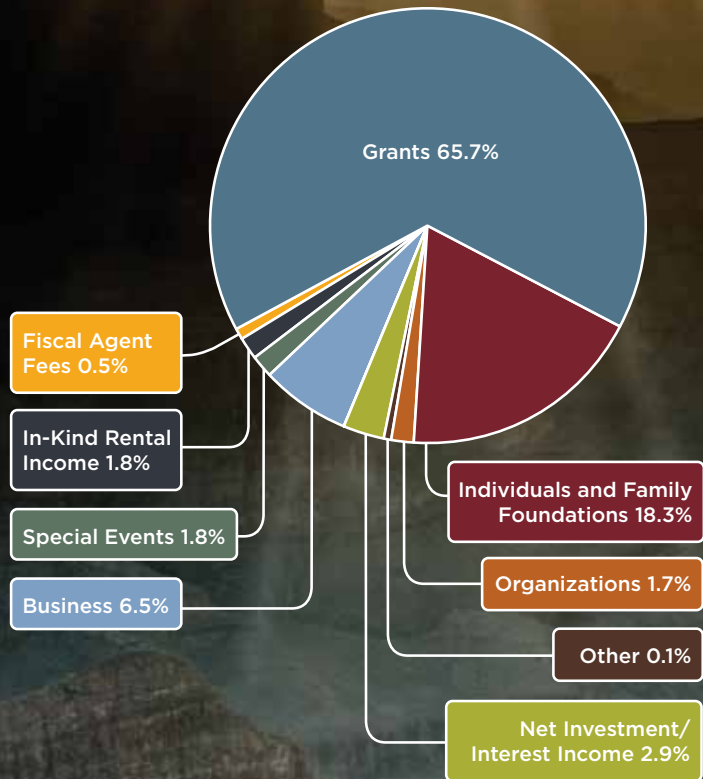
ARIZONA

NEW MEXICO

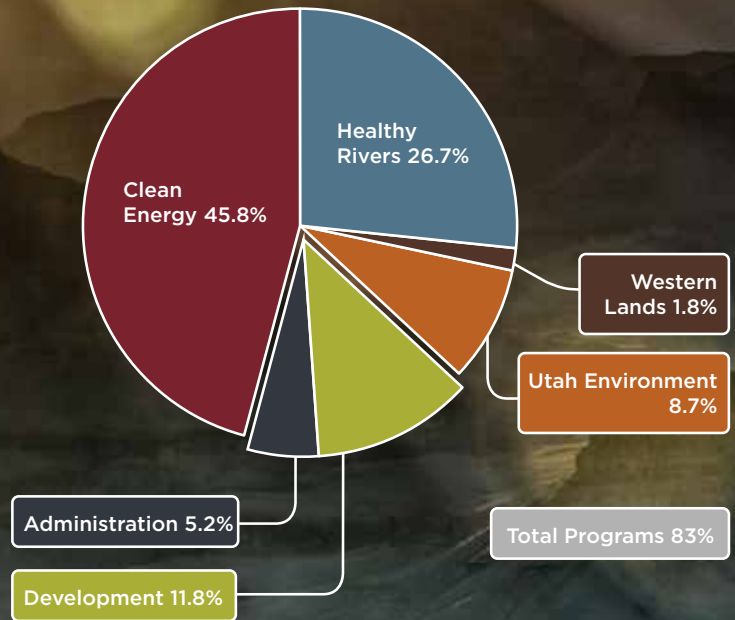
# 2016

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

### REVENUE



### EXPENSES





|                      |                                    |                  |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>REVENUE</b>       | Grants                             | 2,509,370        |
|                      | Individuals and Family Foundations | 698,301          |
|                      | Organizations                      | 65,300           |
|                      | Professional Fees                  | 25,520           |
|                      | Net Investment/Interest Income     | 109,708          |
|                      | Other                              | 5,240            |
|                      | Government                         | 0                |
|                      | Business                           | 248,886          |
|                      | Special Events                     | 69,625           |
|                      | In-Kind                            | 0                |
|                      | Rental Income                      | 67,767           |
|                      | Fiscal Agent Fees                  | 21,196           |
| <b>TOTAL REVENUE</b> |                                    | <b>3,820,913</b> |

|                       |                               |                  |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>EXPENSES</b>       | Expenses by Program           |                  |
|                       | Clean Energy                  | 2,049,686        |
|                       | Healthy Rivers                | 1,191,630        |
|                       | Western Lands                 | 78,352           |
|                       | Utah Environment              | 388,882          |
|                       | <b>TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES</b> | <b>3,708,550</b> |
|                       | Supporting Services           |                  |
|                       | Development                   | 526,781          |
|                       | Administration                | 234,908          |
|                       | Loss                          | -                |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b> |                               | <b>4,470,239</b> |

|                                 |           |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Change in Net Assets            | (649,508) |
| Net Assets at Beginning of Year | 6,469,785 |
| Net Assets at End of Year       | 5,820,277 |

# WHO WE ARE

## Board of Directors



**Bryan Morgan**  
Chair  
Boulder, CO



**Ruben Alvarez**  
Phoenix, AZ



**Donna House**  
Ohkay Owingeh, NM



**Patrick de Freitas**  
Vice Chair  
Salt Lake City, UT



**Chelsea Congdon  
Brundige**  
Snowmass, CO



**Carla Johnson**  
Boulder, CO



**Ron Binz**  
Treasurer  
Denver, CO



**Elaine Walsh  
Carney**  
Wilson, WY



**Will Stites**  
Boulder, CO



**AJ Grant**  
Secretary  
Boulder, CO



**Eli Feldman**  
Boulder, CO



**Nicole González  
Patterson**  
Phoenix, AZ





## Staff

|                   |   |                     |  |
|-------------------|---|---------------------|--|
| Penny Anderson    | Energy Program Assistant and IT Coordinator | Patti Kinnear       | Director of Development                      |
| Drew Beckwith     | Water Policy Manager                        | Reed Koenig         | Healthy Rivers Program Legal Fellow          |
| Laura Belanger    | Water Resources & Environmental Engineer    | Steve Michel        | Chief of Policy Development                  |
| Ariel Calmes      | Staff Attorney                              | Bart Miller         | Healthy Rivers Program Director              |
| Jenn Campbell     | Outreach and Events Manager                 | Glenda Murphy       | Legal Assistant                              |
| Joan Clayburgh    | Communications Director                     | Regina Nichols      | Office Administrator & Legal Assistant       |
| Dave Effross      | Senior Energy Policy Advisor                | John Nielsen        | Clean Energy Program Director                |
| Gwen Farnsworth   | Senior Energy Policy Advisor                | Amelia Nuding       | Senior Water Resources Analyst               |
| Jorge Figueroa    | Senior Water Policy Analyst                 | Brian Ortiz         | Administration Assistant                     |
| Jennifer Gardner  | Staff Attorney                              | Erin Overturf       | Chief Energy Counsel                         |
| Rich Dougherty    | Information Technology Manager              | Harrison Schmitt    | Vice President of Programs and Strategy      |
| Jon Goldin-Dubois | President                                   | Chris Scolari       | Western Lands Program Director               |
| Rachael Hamby     | Western Lands Policy Analyst                | Steve Seely         | Foundation Relations Manager                 |
| Robert Harris     | Senior Staff Attorney                       | Linda Stitzer       | Arizona Senior Water Policy Advisor          |
| Alison Hunnicutt  | Development and Stewardship Officer         | Chris Tallackson    | Donor Relations Manager                      |
| Gabriella Hunt    | Executive Assistant                         | Stacy Tellinghuisen | Sr. Energy/Water Policy Analyst              |
| Ella Jeffers      | Accounting Manager                          | Rick Trilsch        | Vice President of Finance and Administration |
| Pam Johnson       | Office Administrator                        | Joro Walker         | General Counsel                              |
| Robert Johnston   | Senior Staff Attorney                       | Kristie Wang        | Digital Enhancement Manager                  |
| Nancy Kelly       | Senior Policy Advisor                       | Ken Wilson          | Engineering Fellow                           |





[www.westernresourceadvocates.org](http://www.westernresourceadvocates.org)

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>COLORADO OFFICE</b>   | 2260 Baseline Road, Suite 200 ▪ Boulder, CO 80302 ▪ 303.444.1188       |
| <b>ARIZONA OFFICE</b>    | P.O. Box 64128 ▪ Tucson, AZ 85728 ▪ 520.488.2436                       |
| <b>NEW MEXICO OFFICE</b> | 409 East Palace Av., Unit 2 ▪ Santa Fe, NM 87501 ▪ 505.820.1590        |
| <b>NEVADA OFFICE</b>     | 550 W. Musser, Suite G ▪ Carson City, NV 89703 ▪ 775.841.2400          |
| <b>UTAH OFFICE</b>       | 150 South 600 East, Suite 2A ▪ Salt Lake City, UT 84102 ▪ 801.487.9911 |



PROTECTING THE WEST'S LAND, AIR, AND WATER

2260 Baseline Road, Suite 200  
Boulder, CO 80302

**For a full list of WRA successes, please visit our  
website [www.westernresourceadvocates.org](http://www.westernresourceadvocates.org)**

Above: Arches National Park, UT  
Front: Fall foliage in Colorado